

Description

SIDEWALL CHANNEL MOSFET WITH STRAINED SILICON CHANNEL ON STRAINED SiGe

BACKGROUND OF INVENTION

- [0001] The field of the invention is CMOS integrated circuit processing, in particular transistors with strained semiconductor in the channel.
- [0002] In contemporary CMOS technology, there is significant interest and work in the use of strained material for the field effect transistor (FET) channel.
- [0003] In one approach silicon-germanium alloy (SiGe), is used to form a surface channel strained Si/relaxed SiGe NMOS-FET, biaxial tensile strain is induced in a very thin epitaxial Si layer. The tensile strain induces conduction band splitting, which results in re-population of the energy bands that enhances the electron mobility.
- [0004] In the case of a PMOSFET, the Ge concentration must be greater than about 30% in order to have an effective in-

crease in hole mobility.

[0005] This approach has the following defects:

[0006] 1)The strained silicon is grown on relaxed SiGe, and therefore it is difficult to control the defect density.

[0007] 2)The requirement for enhanced performance of more than 30% Ge concentration further increases the defect density.

[0008] 3)The high diffusion speed in SiGe means that a very low temperature source/drain anneal is required in order to achieve a shallow junction.

SUMMARY OF INVENTION

[0009] The invention relates to a structure for a field effect transistor that employs a strained silicon channel formed on a base of compressively strained SiGe.

[0010] A feature of the invention is that the same structure is used for both n-type FETs (NMOS) and p-type FETs (PMOS) structures.

[0011] A feature of the invention is that there is no strain in the channel material along the direction of travel of the carriers.

[0012] Another feature of the invention is that there is significant tensile strain in at least one direction perpendicular to the

direction of carrier travel, thereby increasing carrier mobility.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DRAWINGS

- [0013] Figure 1 shows a cross section of a wafer after preliminary steps.
- [0014] Figure 2A shows a perspective view of a transistor according to the invention.
- [0015] Figure 2B shows a cross section of the transistor of Figure 2A.
- [0016] Figure 3 shows the orientation of the crystal lattice.
- [0017] Figure 4 shows an initial stage in forming an alternative embodiment.
- [0018] Figure 5 shows a cross section of the alternative embodiment

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

- [0019] Figure 1 shows a cross section of a silicon SOI wafer with substrate 10, buried (oxide) insulator 20 (referred to as BOX) and silicon on insulator (SOI) layer 30, also referred to as a device layer. In this Figure, the y direction is vertical, the z direction extends to the left and right and the x direction extends into and out of the plane of the paper. An epitaxial layer of SiGe 40 has been grown in contact

with layer 30 and a silicon dioxide (oxide – SiO_2) hard-mask 60 has been deposited or grown on layer 40.

[0020] The lattice constant of layer 30 is the standard for (100) oriented silicon wafers, with lattice constant $a=5.43\text{Angstroms}$ in the x,y,z direction. The epitaxial SiGe 40 has lattice constant a in the x direction, since it matches the value of layer 30. The SiGe has lattice constant b ($b > a$) in the y direction since SiGe naturally has a larger lattice constant than silicon. The layer also has lattice constant a in the z direction, since that value is also determined by the epitaxial growth process.

[0021] The SiGe crystal structure serves to define the lattice constants for the silicon channel layers that will be put down later. In particular, as is indicated in Figure 3, the vertical channel layers 50 have a lattice constant with the value a along the x direction, the direction of travel of the carriers, that is determined indirectly by SOI layer 30. Layer 30 determines through the epitaxial process the value of the SiGe lattice in the x and z direction. The SiGe lattice, in turn, determines the value of the lattice constant of the channel layer in the x and y direction. The SiGe layer is free to assume the value b in the y direction, since the SOI layer does not control the lattice constant in the direction

perpendicular to the plane of the SOI layer.

[0022] Those skilled in the art are aware that the last lattice constant, c , is determined by the previous ones according to the following equation:

[0023] $a \cdot a \cdot a = a \cdot b \cdot c$ (1)

[0024] On the left side of equation (1) the three lattice constants of silicon determine a value (a^3) that controls the remaining lattice constant c .

[0025] The SiGe layer 40 is patterned using any convenient hard-mask to define islands that will become the support for field effect transistors. A directional etch such as a reactive ion etch (RIE) etches through the layers 40 and 30, stopping on BOX 20.

[0026] Figure 2A shows a transistor formed according to the invention. The layers shown in Figure 2A are the outermost layers of the transistor structure. The portion of Si layer 30 beneath the SiGe island is covered by the polycrystalline silicon (poly) gate and by the source and drain in this view. At the center, the transistor gate 140 covers the silicon channel layers that will be shown in other Figures. Source 110 on the left and drain 112 on the right bracket the gate area of the transistor.

[0027] Figure 2B shows a cross section through the island after

completion of the structure. Substrate 10 and BOX 20 remain as before. SiGe layer 40 has been patterned as described above. SOI layer 30 has been patterned in the same step that defined the islands to form a bottom layer that defines crystal structure, but does not participate in the transistor operation. After the patterning of the islands, the oxide hardmask 60 is stripped. Strained silicon 50 is then grown epitaxially on the top surface and on both sides of the SiGe support. Gate oxide 55 is grown on the outer surfaces of the silicon 50 and polysilicon gate layer 140 is deposited over the oxide to form a transistor with carriers traveling perpendicular to the plane of the paper in all three layers 50.

[0028] The U-shaped silicon channel layer 50 is in contact with the SiGe, so that it has lattice constant b in the y direction and lattice constant a in the x direction. Layer 50 on the sides has lattice constant c in the z direction. The value of b determines c according to equation (1). The top of layer 50 is a nonstrained Si layer with lattice constant a in every direction.

[0029] Since the lattice constant of the channel layers 50 in the x direction is the same as the un-strained value, there will be no strain in the x direction. There will be tensile strain

in the y direction in the channel layers because they are grown in contact with the SiGe layer, which has lattice constant b (greater than the value characteristic of silicon) in the y direction. When completed, the current will flow through strained silicon layers parallel to the x-y plane. As is known in the art, transverse strain increases the mobility of both electrons and holes. Thus, both n-type and p-type FETs have increased mobility according to the invention.

[0030] The top of layer 50 also carries some current. There is no strain in this layer, and therefore, there is no drive current enhancement in this layer. The transverse distance (left-right distance in Figure 2B) of this top silicon layer can be made very narrow, so that the drive current in this portion of layer 50 is only a small part of the total current.

[0031] At any convenient time, appropriate conventional masks will be deposited and patterned to isolate the transistor body from the source and drain and to define with implants the transistor channel as n-type or p-type. Also at any convenient time, the source and drain may be implanted, silicided or otherwise treated. Those skilled in the art will appreciate that it is an advantageous feature of the invention that tensile strain in the y direction enhances

carrier mobility for both pfets and for NFETS.

[0032] The steps involved in masking and implanting the channels for n-FETs and p-FETs and in preparing the source and drain are conventional and well known to those skilled in the art.

[0033] The transverse distance along the z axis between the two channel layers 50 is not critical and may be chosen for convenience. Preferably, the width of the SiGe island is set as the minimum linewidth for that technology in order to produce a compact layout without excessive processing steps. If a compact layout is more important than processing steps, the following alternative embodiment may be used.

[0034] As an alternative version of the invention, transistors can be formed using techniques developed for manufacturing FINFETs.

[0035] Figure 4 shows an initial structure for this alternative version, with a silicon substrate 10 having a buried insulator layer 20 and a silicon device layer (or SOI layer) 30. This base structure is illustratively a commercially available SIMOX wafer.

[0036] The SOI layer 30 may be illustratively thinned to a thickness of 10 – 20 nm by any convenient method.

[0037] Above silicon layer 30, a layer of SiGe 40 has been epitaxially grown, illustratively to a thickness of 50 – 1000nm. The thickness of the SiGe layer will be dependent on the Ge concentration and such that the SiGe is not relaxed. A temporary silicon layer 45 (5 – 10nm) is grown on top of the SiGe layer and an oxide hardmask 60 is grown on the temporary silicon 45.

[0038] The SiGe lattice constant in the direction to the left and right in Figure 4 (referred to as the z direction) is "a", the same as the value of the device layer, since layer 40 is epitaxial. The SiGe lattice constant in the vertical direction in Figure 4, (referred to as the y direction) is "b", which is greater than a. After definition of a thin SiGe fin, a silicon channel layer 130 will grown on the top and sides of the SiGe fin 40 that will be the channel of the transistor.

[0039] In this example, conventional techniques used in FINFET fabrication to define the fin may be used to define the SiGe fin. For example, Figure 4 shows a temporary poly structure 75 with a nitride sidewall 70 having the fin width is formed; the poly structure is removed and the nitride sidewall 70 is used as a fin hardmask to define the oxide hardmask used in patterning the SiGe stack. In current technology, a width of mask 70 of less than 70 nm is

readily achievable. With present technology, it is preferable that the fin have a width of less than 50 nm for strength. In the future, thinner fins are expected to be used. The actual value will depend on spacing requirements. The silicon and Si – SiGe – Si stack is etched directionally, e.g. a reactive ion etch, stopping on BOX 20.

[0040] After the SiGe fin stack is defined, the oxide hardmask and silicon top layer 45 are removed before the Si channel growth. A Si layer 130 will be grown epitaxially on SiGe 40 that will contain the transistor channel, as shown in Figure 5. The thickness of the silicon may be 10nm. The sidewall Si layer has strain in the y direction (lattice constants a,b,c defined as before). The top Si cap does not have the advantage of a correct strain, but it is kept because it is very difficult to grow gate oxide directly on SiGe.

[0041] The SiGe is grown epitaxially such that the lattice constant in the vertical direction (perpendicular to the plane of the wafer surface) has a value (b) that is the same as the value of the SiGe layer 40 and greater than the lattice constant (a) of SOI layer 30. As with the previous embodiment, the lattice constant of layer 130 in the x direction will be set by equation (1).

[0042] At the bottom, layers 130 are in contact with layer 30 and

also have the silicon crystal structure, so that the lattice constant in the left-right direction at the bottom tends to be a , the same as the value of layer 30. Only a small bottom part of layer 130 touches layer 30, so that there is only a small strain that does not significantly affect the transistor performance. Since this structure is meant to be used with thin SOI layers 30, the vertical extent of the affected portion of layers 130 will be small.

[0043] As a result, the lattice structure for silicon 130 is shown in Figure 3, in which lattice constant " b " is in the direction perpendicular to the wafer, the direction parallel to the path of the carriers (perpendicular to the plane of the paper in Figure 5) is " a ", the value of the SOI layer 30, and the lattice constant in the direction to the left and right in Figure 5 is " c ", with $b > a > c$.

[0044] As with the previous embodiment, a gate oxide is grown on the outer surface of layer 130 and a poly gate is deposited overall. Conventional steps form source and drain areas in electrical contact with the transistor channel. The remainder of the process may be as illustrated in "A Functional FinFET – DG CMOS SRAM cell", IEDM 2002.

[0045] Those skilled in the art will appreciate that variations may be made in the examples shown. For example, the wafer

may be bulk, if that is compatible electrically with the requirements of the transistors, in which case, the term device layer will refer to the top layer of the wafer. Additionally, various materials may be substituted for the examples given and various techniques of forming the support structures may be used. The support structures need not be SiGe. Those skilled in the art will be aware that other materials having appropriate lattice constants and having the ability to be epitaxially deposited may be used.

[0046] While the invention has been described in terms of a single preferred embodiment, those skilled in the art will recognize that the invention can be practiced in various versions within the spirit and scope of the following claims.